

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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DELIVER EB/OA (MEADOWS) OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, UK

SUBJ: CIVAIR: CHARTER UNDERSTANDING

REF: STATE 60380

1. WE ASKED ROGERS (UNDERSECRETARY, DEPT. OF TRADE) WHETHER UK WOULD AGREE TO 30-DAY EXTENSION OF MOU ON ADVANCE BOOKING CHARTERS. ROGERS' REACTION WAS NEGATIVE. ALTHOUGH HE REMAINS FRIENDLY, HE CLEARLY GROWING EXASPERATED OVER LAST-MINUTE HITCH THAT HAS DEVELOPED. ROGERS WILL BE OUT OF COUNTRY FOR REMAINDER OF MARCH AND MOST OF APRIL AND SO WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON CHARTERS. ASIDE FROM HIS PERSONAL UNAVAILABILITY, HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THERE IS A BASIS FOR FURTHER TALKS ON CHARTERS. NOR, HE SAID, IS THERE ANY CERTAINTY THAT LAST-MINUTE HITCH MIGHT NOT AGAIN ARISE AT END OF EXTENSION OF MOU.

2. ROGERS SAID UK NOT PREPARED TO GIVE UP 30-DAY PRELISTING REQUIREMENT ON AFFINITIES. ON QUESTION OF SUBSTITUTIONS, ROGERS SAID IT EXTREMELY
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UNLIKELY THAT FURTHER TALKS WOULD LEAD UK TO ALTER ITS

"COMPASSIONATE REASONS" STANDARD. HE BELIEVES THIS IS A REALISTIC CRITERION AND, HE SAID, IT IS ONE WHICH UK WILL APPLY IN REASONABLE WAY. IF US EVER CONSIDERS THAT UK IS INTERPRETING STANDARD UNREASONABLY HE SAID, WE COULD ALWAYS CALL FOR CONSULTATIONS ON THE ISSUE. ROGERS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT HIS LETTER TO MEADOWS ALREADY CONTAINS STATEMENT THAT "IN ADDITION, IN THE EARLY PART OF THE PERIOD, ANY TRANSITIONAL PROBLEMS WILL BE SYMPATHETICALLY CONSIDERED." HE AS MUCH AS SAID THAT THE HARDER THE US PRESSES THE UK ON THIS ISSUE, THE LESS REASONABLE WILL BE THE UK'S APPLICATION OF THE STANDARD AND THE LESS SYMPATHETIC WILL BE THEIR CONSIDERATION OF TRANSITIONAL PROBLEMS.

3. ROGERS STRESSED THE CLOSE AND EXTREMELY IMPORTANT BILATERAL AVIATION RELATIONSHIP THAT EXISTS BETWEEN THE US AND UK IN ORDER TO POINT OUT THAT FOR THE US TO PRECIPITATE A LAST-MINUTE CHARTER CRISIS OVER AN ISSUE WHICH HE REGARDS AS RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT WOULD HAVE SERIOUSLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON SENSE OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE WHICH THE TWO PARTNERS MUST HAVE IN ONE ANOTHER TO RESOLVE SATISFACTORILY THE MORE DIFFICULT AND MORE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS THEY FACE.

4. COMMENT. BASED ON DISCUSSIONS WITH ROGERS, WE DO NOT BELIEVE BRITISH ARE LIKELY TO AGREE TO 30-DAY EXTENSION OF MOU AND, EVEN IF THEY DID SO IN INTEREST OF TRAVELING PUBLIC, WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE COULD OBTAIN FROM THEM ANY SIGNIFICANT MODERATION IN PRELISTING OR SUBSTITUTION CONDITIONS. ON THE CONTRARY, WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT FURTHER PRESSURES FROM US ARE LIKELY TO BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, NOT ONLY ON CHARTER MATTERS BUT ALSO ON BROADER BILATERAL AVIATION ISSUES AS WELL.

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